

For the troop headquarters nearest you, consult your local phone directory.

Missouri State Highway Patrol

EMERGENCY

1-800-525-5555

or cellular *55

ASSISTANCE

EMERGENCY V/TDD

1-800-525-7559

You may report emergencies 24 hours a day (every day) from anywhere in Missouri by dialing the toll free emergency number. Your call will be routed to the nearest Highway Patrol troop headquarters.

This telephone number is for **EMERGENCIES only**. Please **DO NOT** use this emergency number for information on road or weather conditions.

Road Conditions Hotline

1-800-222-6400 or

(573) 526-8828



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1510 East Elm Street

Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

mshppied@mshp.state.mo.us

www.mshp.state.mo.us



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**If you get
stopped!**



*What motorists
should do*

Introduction

You look into your rearview mirror and see a Patrol car behind you with its emergency lights flashing. This can be a stressful experience.

Knowing what to do, and what not to do, will make the experience less stressful and will help ensure your safety, the safety of other motorists, and the safety of the officer. This pamphlet is designed to inform you of what to do when stopped by a trooper.

Actions you should take

Missouri Law (304.022, RSMo.) requires a motorist to pull as far as possible to the right of the traveled portion of the highway and stop when a police car approaches displaying emergency equipment. The motorist must remain stopped until the patrol car has passed, or a police officer directs you otherwise.

When you see flashing red lights on a patrol car, don't panic. Simply slow down, signal your intentions to turn onto the right shoulder, and drive off the roadway to the right as far as you can safely do so.

It is important that **neither you nor your passengers make any sudden or undirected movements!** The trooper does not know who you are or your intentions.

Actions the trooper will take

After an explanation as to why you were stopped, the trooper may ask for your driver's license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance identification card. While the trooper is approaching your

vehicle **DO NOT** attempt to reach under your seat, in the glove compartment, in a console, or any other place hidden from the trooper's view.

The trooper will often complete the contact without requiring you to leave your car. Sometimes it may be necessary for the trooper to ask you to take a seat in the patrol car. Court cases permit the officer to decide which procedure is safest for the officer. As you exit your car, **always keep your hands in plain view of the trooper.**

If a traffic ticket is issued by the officer, please maintain a polite and cooperative attitude. Do not attempt to debate the merits of the traffic ticket on the side of the highway. The court is the proper place to contest any grievance.

Special note

If you are alone and uncertain if the person trying to stop you is a legitimate police officer, pull over but keep your car doors locked. When your vehicle is then approached, roll your window down only far enough to talk. Express your concern and desire to drive to the nearest public place. Most police officers will understand. Once there, remain in your secured vehicle until proper identification of the officer is made.

For your information

A traffic ticket is a legal document issued by troopers for traffic violations. A space for your signature is provided near the bottom of the traffic ticket. By signing the traffic ticket, you are not admitting guilt. Your signature merely acknowledges receipt of the traffic ticket and that you promise to appear in court on the given court date or that you will contact the court prior to the court date for disposal of the case. Refusing to sign the traffic ticket will not eliminate your obligation to appear in court. Once the trooper gives you a copy of the traffic ticket, you have been served a sum-

mons (subpoena) to appear in court. Failure to appear on your scheduled court date is a violation of law and may result in additional charges being filed against you.

In nearly all court cases where a fine is levied, court costs **must** be paid. Even if you pay the traffic violation fine by mail, the court case must still be processed through the court system. Therefore, the court costs must be paid. Court costs help fund the court system. **Fine moneys help fund Missouri's public schools. Fine moneys and court costs do not fund the Highway Patrol.**

Troopers may provide you with an information sheet explaining the court's mail-in procedures. The troopers do not collect fines.

If you lose your copy of the ticket you must contact the associate circuit court of the county in which the ticket was written. The trooper issuing the ticket is not allowed to discuss the ticket once you have been released from the traffic stop. It is the responsibility of the violator to handle all traffic tickets in a timely manner. A warrant will be issued by the court for individuals who fail to comply with the requirements of a traffic ticket.

Conclusion

Traffic laws are enacted to ensure the safety of the motoring public. Help make Missouri highways safe, please obey our traffic laws.

If you are issued a traffic ticket and you have questions concerning it, feel free to ask the trooper when a copy is given to you. You may also call the county prosecuting attorney of the county where you are to appear in court. Employees at the nearest Highway Patrol troop headquarters will also be willing to assist. A traffic ticket issued by one trooper cannot be changed by another Patrol employee.